

### ***Legislation establishes inter-agency effort to address environmental health and safety risks for American children***

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (NY-28) this week introduced legislation aimed at protecting the most vulnerable victims of environmental health hazards – our children. Her legislation, the Children's Health Task Force Act, formally establishes an inter-agency task force charged with addressing risks such as the impact of air pollution, hazardous chemicals and lead exposure on children.

"The number of children at risk for lead poisoning alone remains unacceptably high," said Slaughter. "Today there are 442,000 children with elevated blood levels, yet Congress continues to drastically cut funding for lead poisoning prevention programs. There is simply no safe level of lead exposure for children. Research has shown that lead is damaging to the developing brains of young children and can have harmful long-term effects on behavior and IQ. I believe it is reprehensible to allow this kind of damage to happen to children. This quiet tragedy is entirely preventable, and it is our responsibility to protect our children and make lead poisoning a thing of the past."

In 1997, former President Clinton established by Executive Order an inter-agency task force to address high priority risks to children's health. Former President George W. Bush further amended the Executive Order to extend the work of this task force an additional few years. Since its establishment, the Task Force has successfully developed strategies and actions plans for addressing asthma, unintentional injuries, lead poisoning, childhood cancer, and school environments. Slaughter's legislation would ensure the Task Force continues to operate in years to come, and has the support of the Rochester Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Center for Healthy Housing, and Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital.